Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1360– September 5 2003

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1360 with a release date of Friday, September 5th 2003 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Pro-code fights back. A petition to retain Morse code testing is filed with the FCC and others are reportedly on the way. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1360 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESTRUCTURING: PRO CODE PETITION FLED WITH THE FCC

The proponents of retaining Morse testing for all candidates for a United States Amateur License with high frequency operating priveleges are striking back. This, with a petition that not only asks the F-C-C to retain the 5 word per minute C-W exam, but to also require that Extra class pass a 12 word per minute test. And the organization that I sponsoring the measure also wants written exams stiffened as well. Amateur Radio Newsline’s David Black, KB4KCH, has more on this attempt to row against the deregulatory tide:

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For the past couple of months, more and more countries have been steering toward making amateur radio code-free. That follows the July abolition of Morse code testing by the World Radiocommunications Conference. In the United States, the Federal Communications Commission has before it six petitions essentially seeking to remove Morse code from amateur radio in the U-S. Supporters of the code have been quiet--until now. A group called FISTS--said to be the largest code advocacy organization in the world--is leading an effort to make Morse code a more prominent part of ham radio and the licensing process.

FISTS is an international Morse code preservation society based in the United Kingdom with chapters world-wide. Its stated objective is to further the use of the Morse code in Amateur Radio communications. The group's north American chapter has delivered a detailed rule-making request to the FCC that seeks more than just making sure that Morse code testing is retained.

FISTS asks the Commission to raise the standards in other areas of testing, too. Nancy Kott, WZ8C, is U-S Chapter Manager for FISTS, and is Editor of Worldradio Magazine. She wrote the rule making request. Among the proposals are keeping code as a mandatory testing element for the General and Extra class licenses. General licenses would require 5 words per minute and Extra class licenses would require 12 word per minute code proficiency.

FISTS says passing a 5 word per minute code test is no hindrance to people wanting to upgrade, and cites the large number of Technician class operators upgrading to General as proof.

FISTS also says that those aiming for the Extra license should be able to demonstrate Morse code skill at 12 words per minute.

Today's written exams are too easy. At least, that's what FISTS seems to suggest in noting that the FCC sought comments before amateur radio's restructuring about whether fewer morse code requirements should be offset by increased technical content on written questions. FISTS notes that nearly every commenter said yes, but the Commission's Report and Order failed to address the issue.

FISTS says the commission has a chance now to make General class written tests equivalent to the Advanced class written tests before restructuring. In other words, go back to the way it was, with tests that are harder and more thorough.

FISTS wants the Extra class exam to be more thorough, as well. It wants the FCC to require written knowledge of circuit design, information theory, digital methods and encoding schemes and software radio. FISTS says candidates for the Extra class ticket need to show a more thorough knowledge of propagation and geophysics than current tests require.

For the Technician class operator, FISTS suggests merging the Technician and Tech-Plus classes and not require a Morse code exam. But FISTS says technical content should be emphasized and should include the digital modes. FISTS advocates extending Technician Class privileges to include digital modes within the current Novice subbands, which it says should be kept. The group says that would let Technician Class operators participate in the explosive growth in digital applications occurring within the Amateur Radio Service on the high frequency bands.

But when it comes to giving Technicians even limited phone privileges on HF, FISTS says no. The group says the rush of upgrades by Technicians to higher classes following restructuring indicates that the barrier between General and Technician classes has already been lowered enough without needing to go any further.

FISTS also suggests one other big change and that involves taking license tests. Right now, if you fail an exam, you can go back and try again at the same session. FISTS is asking the Commission to impose a 24-hour waiting period before being able re-take either a failed written test or a failed code test.
For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm David Black, KB4KCH.

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There’s 14 pages to the FISTS filing. You can read it on-line at ftp://ftp.qsl.net/pub/n1ea/FIST_FCC_Petition_8-30-303.pdf. As we go to air, no Rule Making designation has been assigned to the FISTS request.
(ARNewsline(tm))

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RESTRUCTURING: ACA PAPER SUGGESTS TOTAL RESTRUCTURING OF VK HAM RADIO

Meantime, down-under the Australian Communications Authority has surprised that nations ham radio community with a proposal to totally restructure that nations Amateur Radio service.   Jim Linton, VK3PC, has the rest of the story.

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Radical changes are being proposed for the Amateur Service in the just issued ACA discussion paper entitled "A Review of Amateur Service Regulation." The paper is sure to stimulate debate, particularly its reference to interference experienced by domestic television and radio receivers, and a suggestion that radio amateurs should take full responsibility to resolve these problems.

A major purpose of the paper is to discuss the implementation of the changes arising out of the World Radiocommunications Conference held in Geneva this year. These changes include the end of mandatory Morse code tests for amateur licences, amateur callsigns, third party traffic, communications during disasters, and reciprocal and visitor licensing.

The ACA, as expected, has also taken the opportunity to discuss restructuring of amateur licensing, the regulatory controls and administration of the Amateur Service in Australia. The paper acknowledges the WIA's proposal for a new entry level licence, and the potential for it to replace the current Novice licence. It discusses restructuring of the current system of seven different amateur licence types (five operator, plus repeater and beacon), to create only two operator licence types - Unrestricted and Novice.

On a positive note the paper hints that the removal of Morse code tests for amateur licences may occur earlier than the ACA's current timetable. It states that if there is sufficient public support, the code requirement could be removed prior to its proposed implementation of regulatory changes flowing from its discussion paper in early 2005.

In a controversial proposal, the ACA is to consider the introduction of a "no interference" policy for radio amateurs. It states "The operation of an amateur station, which is essentially a hobby, should not disturb another person's activities, such as television viewing or radio listening, or affect commercial activities." Should the "no interference" policy be introduced, it would be a major shift from the current ACA policy that provides for a shared responsibility between the radio amateur and his neighbour for the resolution of an interference problem.

To make it clear, the ACA explains "This would mean that an amateur must not cause interference to other radiocommunication services. If causing interference to another service, the obligation will be on the amateur to resolve the problem."

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The Australian Communications Authority has set a deadline of October 31st as the last day for hams to file responses to its discussion paper. The 50-page discussion paper can be downloaded from www.wiavic.org.au/news or www.wia.org.au/vk4 (Q-News)

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RADIO LAW: THE ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS SAYS NO TO BPL

Back here in the United States, word that the Academy of Model Aeronautics is saying no to the introduction of Broadband Over Powerline or B-P-L technology. In Reply Comments to the FCC, the 175,000 member aviation hobby group says that

it is concerned that B-P-L deployment could cause harmful interference to users of Radio Controlled systems and pose a safety hazard to aeromodeling equipment and spectators.

In its filing the A-M-A says that Broadband Over Powerline holds the potential to severely interfere with radio controlled models which operate in or near the 27, 50, 72 and 75 MHz bands. All of these fall within the 1 point 7 through 80 MHz spectrum where the FCC proposes to permit B-P-L to operate.

To the A-M-A this means that Broadband Over Powerline may not yield the benign environment the Commission expects. Also, that it could result in an unanticipated negative impact on Radio Controlled operations. And that’s what it has told the FCC. (AMA release)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the North East Oklahoma V-H-F Net serving North Eastern Oklahoma.

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO LAW: MARYLAND COUNTY FILES RFI CONTROL APEAL TO FCC

Still with regulatory news, the CGC Communicator reports that Anne Arundel County, Maryland has filed an Application for Review before the full Commission. This, in the hope of reversing an order by the FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau that prevents the County from entering into the radio frequency interference control business through zoning laws. Laws that could even impact on ham radio, C-B and GMRS operators.

In 2001 Anne Arundel County, Maryland, had enacted legislation requiring that, prior to receiving a County zoning certificate, owners and users of any sort of telecommunications facility had to show that their installation would not degrade or interfere with the County's public safety communications systems. The ordinance also permitted the County to revoke a zoning certificate where degradation or interference was found.

Alarmed, telecommunications providers took the ordanance to the FCC asking that it be overturned. Last July it did just that. It In considering the case, the Commission found that the challenged provisions of the Anne Arundel County zoning Ordinance infringe on the Commission's exclusive jurisdiction over RFI and are preempted under the doctrine of field preemption. Now the county is upping the antie.

In its pleading, Anne Arundel County maintains that reversal of the Bureau's decision is required because the Order conflicts with a controlling statute of the Communications Act. The County further states that, pending implementation of the Commission's 800 MHz proceeding, the Bureau's decision leaves public safety systems of local governments such as the County's vulnerable and powerless to deal with what it terms as -- quote: “ potentially deadly radio

frequency interference from wireless systems of commercial mobile radio service providers operating in the 800 MHz band.”

The FCC has invited comments on this matter by September 26. More is on-line at the U-R-L featured in this weeks Amateur Radio Newsline printed report.

(DO NOT READ: The complete story in the the FCC website at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-03-2734A1.doc) (CGC)

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RESCUE RADIO: CELL PHONE HELPS RESCUE FCC OFFICIAL

A cellular telephone has helped to rescue two men dangling in a gondola buffeted by severe winds near Aspen Colorado. One of them is the chief of the Federal Communications Commission's Wireless Bureau who turned to the phone during an ordeal where he was trapped for more than two hours. Amateur Radio Newsline’s Bruce Tennant. K-6PZW, reports:

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According to news reports John Muleta leaned on the technology he oversees when he and Robert Pepper, an adviser to FCC Chairman Michael Powell, got stuck in the gondola on Monday, August 19th. The two men had used a break in a telecommunications summit to take in the view from atop of 11,000 foot Aspen Mountain.

Their sightseeing trip turned into an ordeal when the tram service abruptly shut down during their return. It stranded Muleta and Pepper n the enclosed gondola part way down the mountain. When help was slow to arrive, Muleta used his cellular phone to call for assistance. But the local service provider provider apparently did not have the latest "enhanced" 911 technology and could not locate him precisely. So Muleta simply directed the rescue effort over the phone.

Once off the mountain Muleta told the press that he was very happy that he had remembered to carry his cellular telephone with him. He added that had he not, that it would have been a much different scenario. This, if they had been trapped all night with the weather getting getting colder.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I’m Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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Ironically, just before he left for the trip Muleta told an interviewer that the FCC is looking at ways to accelerate the deployment of Enhamced 911 service. This is the system that uses G-P-S technology to more precisely locate callers. (Published News Reports)

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ENFORCEMENT: INTERNET SALES BRING LETTER OF INQUIREY

The FCC has sent a letter of inquirey to Randy Owen, N9UOM, of Toma Wisconsin regarding his license renewal application. The Commision is asking Owen about his apparent involvement in the sale of non-certified C-B transcievers and

non-certified High Frequency amplifiers over the Internet in 2002. Owen is the owner of Roper Electronics whose website was advertising the merchandise for sale. (FCC)

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ENFORCEMENT: FORMER HAM WARNED NOT TO CONTACT THE FCC

A brefly licensed former ham has been told not to call the FCC and wait for it to contact him. The agency's Daryl Duckworth, NN0W, explains:

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(Duckworth) "Jack Gerritsen of Bell California has recieved a warnng notice about a violation of ex-patrte rules after his license had been set aside. His repeated calls to the offices of Administrative Law Judges is a violation odf the Commission's rules against ex-parte communications. Ex-parte rules place restrictions on contacts with Commission decision making personel."

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Gerritsen's license and KG6IRO call sign were set aside only days after they were issued back in November of 2001. This after the FCC learned that he had been convicted in California state court of a radio related offense. It also recieved complaints alleging that Gerritsen had been on the ham bands prior to recieving his license. (FCC, RAIN)

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NAMS IN THE NEWS: 9M2TO WINS UKDXF AZWARD

Some names in the news. The Chiltern DX Club of the U-K DX Foundation has awarded its prestigious 'Local Heroes' Award for 2003 to Tex Izumo, 9M2TO. The club's awards committee recognized the commitment Izumo has shown in providing many contacts and confirmations with amateurs world-wide on all bands from 160 to 6 metres over a period of many years.

This annual award goes to an operator resident in a DX country who has provided excellent service to the DX community and who maintains a high standard of operating without the benefit of major sponsorship. The award carries a cash prize and a year's honorary membership in the Chiltern DX Club. (GB2RS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: HAM APPEARS ON TV MOTORCYCLE SPECIAL

Bob Mastrangelo, WA6ZTA, of Thousand Oaks Californis reports that he recently participated in the filming of a motorcycle special that aired August 28th on The Travel Channel. The show is called Revolution on Wheels, and Bob is seen in the beginning riding his yellow Honda Gold Wing and is interviewed about 25 minutes later. Since The Travel Channel does repeat these programs, check local listings to see when it will air again and keep an eye open for WA6ZTA. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: KB4KCH NEW VP OF ARNEWSLINE(TM)

The Board of Directors of the Amateur Radio Newsline has confirmed the appointment of David Black, KB4KCH, of Helena, Alabama, as its Vice President. Black, whom you heard earlier in this newscast will fill out the unexpired term of Roy Neal, K6DUE, who died last month following heart valve surgery.

David Black, KB4KCH, is owner First Frame Video in Birmingham, Alabama. He is also a 20-year veteran of the broadcast television industry. Prior to starting First Frame Video, David worked as a television news reporter and weather anchor at WVTM, the NBC affiliate serving Birmingham, Alabama. KB4KCH also has extensive radio and television experience while working in broadcasting in Texas.

In addition to his reporting and anchoring Amateur Radio Newsline for well over a decade, KB4KCH is active in amateur radio Skywarn and emergency communications. He is past President of the Birmingham Amateur Radio Club and is one of the founders of ALERT Alabama. This is an organization of radio amateurs specializing in Skywarn communications to assist the National Weather Service in the Birmingham area. (ARNewsline (tm))

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today’s radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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VOLUNTEERISM: HCI NEEDS VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES EDITOR

If you are a Shortwave Listener, live on the West Coast and want to edit an S-W-L newsletter, listen up. This one is for you.

Duane Fischer who heads up the Hallicrafters Collectors International needs a volunteer editor who can post the annual schedules of worldwide Shortwave radio stations. The site, located in cyberspace at www.w9wze.org/SWL contains loggings, current news, tidbits and program schedules. If you would like to become the Schedules Editor, please contact Duane as soon as possible at dfischer@usol.com and tell him you heard about it on the Amateur Radio Newsline. (ASWLC, WDX6AA)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ARISS PACKET UPDATE

An update to last weeks story on the wayward packet radio system on board the International Space Station. Those of you who were on the air on Sunday,

August 24 are aware that the packet system was re-activated around 12:00 UTC. Shortly thereafter, the ARISS team received reports from the general ham community that the packet system was operational.

Over the next 9 hours, many hams around the world sent digital signals through the packet system. But later that day, at around 21:22 U-T-C, the packet system abruptly stopped operating while traveling over the Western part of the U.S.

According to AMSAT's Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, the ARISS team has had several discussions on next steps to get the system back up and running properly. But it may be some time before this can be accomplished. This is because the debug efforts may be delayed further due to the arrival of the Progress 12P re-supply ship which will be keeping the two man crew very busy.

Once time is available, the plan is to have the crew report out on the status of the packet module and then to recycle the power. This should bring the packet system back up. If the system abruptly shuts down again after a few hours the ARISS team will then ask the crew to attach a computer to the packet module, download the current parameters to the ground and reset the module.

Stay tuned. ARISS promises to pass along word of progress as it happens. (AMSAT, ARISS)

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INTERNATIONAL - AUSTRALIA: NEW BANDSPACE FOR VK HAMS

On the international beat, word than all-Australian radio amateurs will be allowed to operate between 3.776 and 3.800 Mhz effective from the 1st of January 2004. The move follows a proposal put to the Australian Communications Authority by the Wireless Institute of Australia several years ago. (GB2RS)

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INTERNATIONAL - WORLDWIDE: LIGHTHOUSE WEEKEND A BIG HIT

Meantime, reports from the around the world indicate that there was allot of activity in this years International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend operating event. Jeramy Boot, of the GB2RS News Service has the details:

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Mike Dalrymple, GM4SUC, the organiser of the International Lighthouse / Lightship Weekend reports that a record number of stations - 369 - were established at lighthouses and lightships in 48 countries - another record - over the weekend of the 16th and 17th of August.

The official list of participants can be found on the ILLW website. Next year the event will be on the 21 and 22nd of August 2004, and Mike invites individuals and groups to join in with a weekend of enjoying radio from a lighthouse or lightship.

Jeramy Boot, G4NJH

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The International Lighthouse website is in cyberspace at http://illw.net. GM4SUC adds that as soon as you have your plans for participatiin in the 2004 Lighthouse Weekend made to let him know. You can contact Mike by e-mail to GM4SUC@compuserve.com (GB2RS)

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DX

In D-X, word that IN3VZE will be active once more as 7Q7CE from Malawi through the 21st of September. QSL as directed on the air. (GB2RS)

And the K3EOD Contest Team will be active in the September VHF UHF contest September 13th to the 14th. The group consists of W3EFH, K3EGE, WR3P, W2SJ and K3EOD. They will be on all bands from 6 meters RF through visible light using SSB, CW and laser communications. For more information please e-mail k3eod@juno.com (VHF REflector)

Lastly, HL1IWD reports that he will be visiting Honolulu through the 12th of September, and will operate as KH6 stroke KB1AIM on 20 metres, mainly CW. QSL is via HL1IWD. (Modern DX)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: NO MORE USE OF THE WORD E-MAIL IN FRANCE

And finally this week, a note from France where the governmet has said goodbye to the term e-mail in favor of the native language term courriel. A word that linguistically sensitive France is now using to refer to electronic mail in all official documents and hopes that the public will adopt as well.

Frances' Culture Ministry announced a ban on the use of e-mail in all government ministries, documents, publications or Web sites on July 18th. This, as the latest step to stem what it sees as an incursion of English words into the French language.

Courriel is a contraction of the two words and is a term that has often been used in French speaking Quebec Canada. The ministry's General Commission on Terminology and Neology insists Internet surfers in France are broadly using the term "courrier electronique'' instead of e-mail - a claim some industry experts dispute.

And we thought that you would like to know! (Published reports)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box

660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I’m Jeff Clark, K8JAC, Im Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, saying 73 and we thank you for listening."
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